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# Jane Cable

#### GEORGE BARR McCUTCHEON.

Author of "Beverly of Graustark," Etc.

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(Continued.) James Bansemer's law and loan of- baffled them, and virtue was not its clear white page, but it is scarcely nec- faithfulness. essary to add that the black, besmirched lines on the opposite side of the sheet could be traced through every entry that went down on the fresh white surface. Bansemer was just as nefarious in his transactions, but he was a thousandfold more cautious. Droom sarcastically reminded him that he had a reputation to protect in his new field, and, besides, as his son was "going in society" through the influence of a coterie of Yale men, it would be worse than criminal to deteriorate. Bansemer loathed Droom, but he also

feared him. He was the only living creature that inspired fear in the heart of this bold schemer. It is true that he feared the effect an exposure might have on the mind of his stalwart son, the boy with his mother's eyes, but he had succeeded so well in blinding the youth in the years gone by that the prospects of discovery now seemed too remote for concern. The erstwhile New York shark was now an eel, wily the lady certainly did not correspond and elusive, but he was an eel with a to what his memory recalled. Investishark's teeth and a shark's voracious- gation, however, assured him that the ly at home with the man whom he had ness. He had grown old in the study Cables' in the mansion near the lake of this particular branch of natural were the people he had known in New history. Bansemer was fifty-five years York. Bansemer took no one into his old in this year of 1898. He was thin- confidence, not even Droom. Once con- Droom shortly. "'Tisn't Michigan ner than in the old New York days, vinced that the erstwhile fireman was but the bull-like vigor had given way now the rich and powerful magnate, he The once black hair was almost white

soon became a figure of whom all eyes of Chicago thoroughfares. Graydon Bansemer, on leaving Yale with a diploma and some of the konors

and grew low and thick on his fore

head. Immaculately dressed, ever



"Good afternoon, Mrs. Cable! And hou is the baby?"

him into his office and ultimately to worked wonders for them. Scandal, licious grin that crossed the face of afford to wait. as was his custom.

of the law, as he had come to know it, liberate. was far from flattering.

plans had been so well prepared and who could destroy her with a word. the execution had been so faultless that The one thing that flashed through there seemed to be no possibility of Bansemer's brain was the realization failure. To take his fair minded son, that she was far more beautiful than with the mother's eyes, into the game he had expected her to be. There was would be suicidal. The young fellow a truly aristocratic loveliness in the would turn from him forever. Banse- rather piquant face, and she undeniamer never went so far as to wonder bly possessed "manner." Maturity had whence came the honest blood in the boy's veins nor to speculate on the origin of the unquestioned integrity. He had but to recall the woman who bore him, the woman whose love was the only good thing he ever knew, the wife he had worshiped while he sinned.

unwholesome trade in reputations, sometimes evading exposure by the narrowest of margins, and he had come to believe that he was secure for all time to come. But it was the "big job" that brought disaster. Just when it looked as though success was assured the crash came. He barely had time to cover his tracks, throw the figurative pepper into the eyes of his enemies and get away from the scene of danger. But he had been clever and resourceful enough to avoid the penalty that looked inevitable and came off with colors trailing, but un-

Perhaps no other man could have escaped. But James Bansemer was cleverest when in a corner. He backed away, held them at bay until he could recover his breath and then defied them

to their teeth. Despite their proof he

fices were not far from the river and, own reward-at least in this instance. it is sufficient to say, not much far- In leaving New York he hoped that ther from State street. He who knows Elias Droom, who knew too much, Chicago well cannot miss the location might refuse to go into the new terrimore than three blocks either way if tory with him, but the gaunt old clerk he takes city hall as a focal point, took an unnatural and malevolent de-The office building in which they were light in clinging to his employer. He located is not a pretentious structure, declined to give up his place in the ofbut its tenants were then and still are fice, and although he hated James Banregarded as desirable. It may be well semer, he came like an accusing to announce that Bansemer on reach- shadow into the new offices near the ing Chicago was clever enough to turn Chicago river, and there he toiled, over a new leaf and begin work on a grinned and scowled with the same old



CHAPTER VI.

T first it was hard for James Bansemer to believe that his henchman had not been mistaken. Droom's description of

to the wiry strength of the leopard. set to work upon the machinery which was to extract personal gain from the secret in his possession. He soon learned that the child was a young wostraight and aggressive in carriage, he man of considerable standing in society, but there was no way for him to took notice even in the most crowded ascertain whether Frances Cable had told the truth to her husband in those dreary far west days.

> Bansemer was rich enough, but avarice had become a habit. The flight from New York had deprived him of but little in worldly goods. His ill gotten gains came with him, and investments were just as easy and just as safe in Chicago as in New York. Now he saw a chance to wring a handsome sum from the rich woman whose only possession had been love when he first knew her. If the secret of Jane's origin still remained locked up in her heart the effort would be an easy one. He learned enough of David Cable, however, to know that if he shared the secret the plan would be profitless and

It was this uncertainty that kept him from calling at the Cable home; likewise from writing a note which might prove a most disastrous folly. Time and circumstance could be his only friends, and he was accustomed to the whims of both. He read of the dinners and entertainments given by the Cables and smiled grimly. Time had make him a partner in the business. he knew, could undo all that ambition James Bansemer never forgot the ma- and pride had wrought. He could well

dangerous.

Elias Droom when the young fellow However, he did not have long to made the proposition not more than a wait, for his opportunity came one fortnight before the Bansemer estab: night in Hooley's theater. Graydon lishment picked itself up and dastily and he occupied seats in the orchestra deserted New York. That grin spoke near the stage and not far from the plainer than all the words in language, lower right hand boxes. It was during Take him into the office? Make this the busy Christmas holidays, but the honest, gray eyed boy a partner? It "star" was of sufficient consequence to was no wonder that Droom grinned, pack the house. The audience was no and it is no wonder that he forgot to end of a fashionable one. Time and cover his mouth with his huge hand, again some strange influence drew his gaze to the gay party in one of the The proposition, while sincere and lower boxes. The face of the woman earnest, was too impossible for words. nearest to him was not visible, but the For once in his life James Bausemer two girls who sat forward turned ocwas at a loss for subterfuge. He casionally to look over the audience, stammered, flushed and writhed in the and he saw that they were pretty, one effort to show the young man that the exceptionally so. One of the men was step would be unprofitable, and he was gray haired and strong featured; the sorely conscious that he had not con- others were quite too insignificant to vinced the eager applicant. He even be of interest to him. The woman urged him to abandon the thought of whose back he could see did not look becoming a lawyer and was ably sec- out over the audience. Her indifferonded by Elias Droom, whose opinion ence was so marked that it seemed de-

At last he felt that her eves were Just at this time Bansemer was en- upon him. He turned quickly. True gaged in the most daring as well as enough, for with lips slightly parted, the most prodigious "deal" of his long her whole attitude suggestive of incareer. With luck it was bound to en- tense restraint, Mrs. Cable was staring rich him to the extent of \$50,000. The helplessly into the eyes of the man

improved her vastly, he confessed, with strange exultation; age had been kinder than youth. He forgot the play, seldom taking his eyes from the back which again had been turned to him. Calculating, he reached the conclusion that she was not more than forty years For years and years he had plied his of age. More than once he made some remark to his son, only to surprise that young man glancing surreptitiously at the face of the more beautiful of the two girls. Even in this early stage James Bansemer began to gloat over the beauty of this new found old acquaintance.

In the lobby of the theater as they were leaving he deliberately doffed his hat and extended a pleasant hand to the wife of David Cable. She turned deathly pale, and there was a startled, piteous look in her eyes that convinced green walls. him beyond all shadow of a doubt. There was nothing for her to do but introduce him to her husband. Twe asking each other how they liked the stomach, bowels and liver, and purifies play and Fate was at work the blood. \*246 play, and Fate was at work.

A few weeks after this scene at the theater young Mr. Bansemer dashed

across the hall from the elevator and entered his father's office just as Elias Droom was closing up.

"Where's the governor, Mr. Droom?" he asked, deliberately brushing past the old clerk in the outer office.

"Left some time ago," replied Droom somewhat ungraciously, his blue eyes staring past the young man with a steadiness that suggested reproach because he was out of the direct line of vision. "It is nearly 6 o'clock. He's never here after 5."

"I know that he- I asked you if you knew of his whereabouts. Do you-or not?" The self confident, athletic youth did not stand in physical awe of the clerk.

"No," was the simple and sufficient

"Well, then, I'm off," said Graydon a trifle less airily.

Droom's overcoat was on and buttoned up to his chin. His long feet were encased in rubbers of enormous size and uncertain age. There must have been no blood in the veins of this grim old man, for the weather was far from cold, and the streets were surprisingly dry for Chicago.

"I am closing the office for the day," said Droom. For no apparent reason a smile spread over the lower part of his face, and Graydon, bold as he was, turned his eyes away.

"I thought I'd stop in and pick up the governor for a ride home in my motor," said he, turning to the door. "Yours is one of the first out here, I suppose," came from the thin lips of

the old clerk. Graydon laughed.

"Possibly. The company charges a nickel a ride, half a dime. Going down, sir?" Graydon had rung for the elevator and was waiting in front of the grating.

A look containing a curious compound of affectionate reproach and a certain senile gratification at being made the object of the boy's condescending raillery crossed Droom's countenance. Without, however, answering his question he slowly and carefully closed the door, tried it vigorously and joined Bansemer at the shaft. With Droom words were unnecessary when actions could speak for themselves.

"Still living over in Wells street, Mr. Droom?" went on Graydon, thoroughfeared and despised by stages from childhood up.

"It's good enough for me," said



There was a startled, piteous look in he

avenue, the Drive or Lincoln Park boulevard, but it's just as swell as I am or ever hope to be."

"There's nothing against Wells street, but-it got ashamed of itself when it crossed the river." "They call it Fifth avenue," sneered

Droom, "but it isn't the avenue, is it?" Bansemer was surprised to note a tone of affectionate pride in the question. "No indeed!" "Oh, there's only one, Mr. Graydon,"

said the old clerk quite warmly; "our Try Sprague's Extra High Grade own Fifth avenue!" "I had no idea you cared so much

for swagger things, Mr. Droom," observed the other, genuinely surprised. "Even Broadway is heaven to me," said Droom, some of the rasp gone from his voice. "Goodby. I got this way," he said when they reached the sidewalk a little later. The young man watched his gaunt figure as it slouched away in the semidarkness.

"By George, the old chap is actually homesick!" muttered he. "I didn't think it was in him.' Droom had rooms over a millinery

shop in Wells street. There was a bedroom at the back and a "living room" in front, overlooking the street from the third story of the building. Of the bedchamber there is but little to say, except that it contained a bed, a washstand, a mirror, two straight backed chairs and a clothespress Droom went out for his bath-every Saturday night. The "living room," however, was queer in more ways than one. In one corner on a chest of draw- Stratford Avenue ers stood his oil stove, while in the opposite corner a big sheet iron heater made itself conspicuous. Firewood was piled behind the stove winter and summer. Droom lamenting that one could not safely discriminate between the seasons in Chicago. The chest of drawers contained his stock of provisions, his cooking and table utensils, his medicine and a small assortment of carpenter's tools. He had no use for

A bookcase, old enough to warm the heart of the most ardent antiquarian. held his small and unusual collection of books. Standing side by side on the same shelf were French romances and the Holy Bible, much bethumbed and penciled. There were schoolbooks alongside of sentimental love tales. Greek lexicons and quaint old fairy stories, law books and works on criminology; books on botany, geology, anatomy and physics. In all perhaps there were 200 volumes. A life of Napoleon revealed signs of almost constant usage. There were three portraits of the Corsican on the dingy

(To be Continued.)

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